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231 Shillong is excellent, the flavour being quite as good as that
263 of English honey. Under "Miscellaneous Customs connected with Death" will be found a reference to the statement that the
[764] dead bodies of Siems used to be embalmed in honey. The existence of the custom is generally denied by Khasis, but its former prevalence is probable, as several trustworthy authors have quoted it.

HOUSES.

342 The houses of the people are cleaner than might be supposed
515 after taking into consideration the dirtiness of the clothes and persons of those who inhabit them. They are as a rule substantial thatched cottages with plank or stone walls, and raised on a plinth some 2 to 3 ft. from the ground. The only
354 window is a small opening on one side of the house, which admits but a dim light into the smoke-begrimed interior. The beams are so low that it is impossible for a person of ordinary stature to stand erect within. The fire is always burning on an earthen or stone hearth in the centre. There is no chimney, the smoke finding its exit as best it can. The firewood is placed to dry on a swinging frame above the hearth. In the
343 porch are stacked fuel and odds and ends. The pigs and calves
342 are generally kept in little houses just outside the main building. The Khasi house is oval-shaped, and is divided into three rooms, a porch, a centre room, and a retiring-room.

354 In olden days the Khasis considered nails *sang*, or taboo, and
784 only used a certain kind of timber for the fender which surrounds the hearth; but they are not so particular now-a-days.
342 In Mawkhar, Cherrapunji, and other large villages, the walls of houses are generally of stone. In Cherrapunji the houses are frequently large, but the largest house I have seen in the hills is that of the Doloi of Suhtnga in the Jaintia Hills, which measures 74 ft. in length. The house of the Siem Priestess at Smit in the Khasi Hills is another large one, being 61 ft. long by 30 ft. broad. In front of the Khasi house is a little space fenced in on two sides, but open towards the village street. The

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or official spokesman of the Siem's Durbar. Another post of oak in this house is furnished by the people of the State.

The houses of the well-to-do Khasis of the present day in Mawkhar and Cherrapunji are built after the modern style with iron roofs, chimneys, glass windows and doors. In Jowai the well-to-do traders have excellent houses of the European pattern, which are as comfortable as many of the European subordinates' quarters in Shillong. Some up-to-date families in Shillong and at Cherra allow themselves muslin curtains and European furniture.

The houses of the Pnar-Wárs are peculiar. The roof, which is thatched with the leaves of a palm called *u tynriew*, is hog-backed and the eaves come down almost to the ground. There are three rooms in the Wár as in the Khasi house, although called by different names in the Wár dialect. The hearth is in the centre room. The houses are built flush with the ground and are made of bamboos. In the Wár villages of Nongjri and Umniuh there are small houses erected in the compounds of the ordinary dwelling-houses called *ieng ksuid* (spirit houses). In these houses offerings to the spirits of departed family ancestors are placed at intervals, this practice being very similar to the more ancient form of Shintoism. In some Wár villages there are also separate bachelors' quarters. This custom is in accordance with that of the Naga tribes. There is no such custom amongst the Khasi Uplanders. The Wár houses are similar to those of the Pnar Wárs, except that a portion of the house is generally built on a platform, the main house resting on the hill-side and the portion on the platform projecting therefrom, the object being to obtain more space, the area for houses in the village sites being often limited owing to the steepness of the hill-sides.

The Bhoi and Lynngam houses are practically similar, and may be described together. They are generally built on fairly high platforms of bamboo, are frequently 30 to 40 ft. in length, and are divided into various compartments in order to suit the needs of the family. The hearth, which is of earth, is in the centre room. There is a platform at the back of the Lynngam house, and in front of the Bhoi house, used for drying paddy, spreading chillies, &c., and for sitting on when the day's

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241 231 784 custom of their own from cultivating the *landoo*, in which case they plant certain other trees favourable to the growth of the lac insect. The villages are situated near their patches of cultivation in the forest. The villages are constantly shifting, 361 owing to the necessity of burning fresh tracts of forest every 241 two years. The houses are entirely built of bamboo, and, for such temporary structures, are very well built. In front, the 342 houses are raised some 3 or 4 ft. from the ground on platforms, being generally built on the side of a fairly steep hill, one end of the house resting on the ground, and the other on bamboo posts. The back end of the house is sometimes some 8 or 9 ft. from the ground. At the end of the house farthest away from the village path is a platform used for sitting out in the evening, and for spreading chillies and 342 other articles to dry. Some Lynngam houses have only one •354 room in which men, women, and children are all huddled 231 together, the hearth being in the centre, and, underneath the platform, the pigs. Well-to-do people, however, possess a 342 retiring room, where husband and wife sleep. A house I measured at Nongsohbar village was of the following dimensions:—Length, 42 ft.; breadth, 16 ft.; height of house from the ground to the eaves, front, 9 ft.; back 18 ft. Houses are built with a portion of the thatch hanging over the eaves in front. No explanation could be given me for this. It is probably a Garo custom. In some Lynngam villages there are houses in the centre of the village where the young unmarried men sleep, where male guests are accommodated, and where the [171] village festivities go on. These are similar to the *dekachang* or bachelors' club-houses of the Mikirs, Garos, and Lalungs, and to the *morang* of the Nagas. This is a custom of the Thibeto-Burman tribes in Assam, and is not a Khasi institution. There [517] are also high platforms, some 12 ft. or 15 ft. in height, in Lynngam villages, where the elders sit of an evening in the hot [356] weather and take the air. Lynngam houses and villages are usually much cleaner than the ordinary Khasi villages, and although the Lynngams keep pigs, they do not seem to be so 352 much *en évidence* as in the Khasi village. There is little 513 or no furniture in a Lynngam house. The Lynngam sleeps on 247 a mat on the floor, and in cold weather covers himself with a

342 But in some huts there are no such partitions and the demarcation is made by the pillars and beams which support the roof of the hut. The small enclosures at the two sides in the front portion are known locally as Ka Kynrein. The Ka Kynrein at the right hand side of the Ka Nympei close to the Ka Kyndur generally is used for storing water. The Ka Kynrein at the left hand side of the Ka Nympei just opposite to that for storing water is used as a larder for potatoes and other provisions. The enclosures at the rear of the Ka Nympei and those remaining at its sides are used as sleeping places. The sleeping places at the sides are known as Ka Iing Kyndong and those at the rear
342 as Ka Rumpei. In most huts there is a window in the Ka
354 Rumpei, high up in the back wall of the hut. In some huts there is a window in the front wall, in the Ka Kyndur. In many huts there is no window at all. Besides the main door in the Ka Kyndur, there is another door to the Ka Kynrein at the right hand side of the Ka Nympei. We were informed that in Cherra the part called Ka Kyndur is termed Ka Shyngkup, and Ka Kynrein as Ka Pyngshai.

In the centre of the Ka Nympei there is the hearth known as Ka Dypei. It is a rectangular space, about four feet and a half in length and three feet and a half in breadth, enclosed by fenders of wood. The floor of the hearth is paved with stone and mud. In the centre of it there are three small-shaped stone
352 pieces which are known as Mawbyrsiew. On the Mawbyrsiew there is an iron triangle known as Ka Nar to hold the pots. The space of the Ka Nympei behind the hearth and in front of the Ka Rumpei is known as Jingbuhkhiewja.

Running round the edge of the Ka Nympei at a man's height there is a wooden frame supported on vertical posts; to this frame are fixed the partitions, separating the Ka Nympei from the Ka Kyndur, Ka Kynrein, Ka Iing Kyndong and Ka Rumpei. This wooden frame is known as Bahtymphan or Bahtympha. Just above the Bahtymphan several stout beams of wood cross the house from side to side and rest on the

pendable water supply. Villages are about two to five miles apart, and have no boundary markers. In the past, villages contained semipublic buildings and grounds: the home of the village priest (also the home of a chief if he resided in that village), the village marketplace, and tree groves, cremation grounds, or other awesome spots that were believed to be inhabited by supernatural beings. Villages today may have also one or more Christian churches, government social welfare buildings, and schools. Formerly, villages were entered through a guarded gateway; this is no longer the case, and paths feed into villages from all directions. Often several villages are nucleated into one large unit, named and also described as a "village." These were once defense units, but were so uncohesive otherwise that institutionalized rivalry obtained among the component villages. Now, they have been integrated through the agency of all-village public services, especially schools. **Housing.** The traditional Khasi house is entered through a door at the rounded end of a U-shaped ground plan, and is about 20 feet at widest extent; it is about 30 feet deep, and is elliptical or hogback in profile. Its walls are of stone blocks cemented with mud. The roof of grass thatch, supported by a bamboo frame, overhangs the walls on their outside, down to about three feet above the ground. The house is divided into two parts: the front one-third is on the ground level, floored either with stone blocks or tamped earth, and is used for storage of occupational instruments and as a shelter for poultry. The rear two-thirds is raised four feet on piles of stone blocks to a platform of planks, and is partitioned into six rooms, comprising a kitchen, areas for storage of food and water, and sleeping quarters. Furniture is minimal, and the house is totally undecorated. There are no windows, and no smoke vents. A house generally has a companion shed, walled of wood and grass matting and thatched with grass. This serves as a pigsty, but it may be partitioned also to house cows, and it may have a loft for fuel storage. Compounds often contain garden plots, and are fenced around with stone or bamboo and mud. Nowadays, the traditional house has given way to Western-style bungalows of wood and tin, especially in and around Shillong. [Cf. Mukherjee et al. 1941.]

361 [944] [443] [778] [344] [178] [712] [628] [178] [182] 342 352 353 354 343 361 177 184 342

ECONOMY. The Khasi economy is a market economy based on agriculture, and most Khasis are primary producers, sellers, middlemen, and/or providers of services in connection with markets. Khasis are often multioccupational: they produce goods for partial subsistence, and also play some part in trade. **Agriculture.** On the Shillong plateau, the major field crops are potatoes, maize, millets, and dry rice, still produced mostly through swidden farming, with a two- to three-year period of fallow, but increasingly through continuous use of a single field with the aid of ma-

241 433 443 [463] 241

342 down /233/ toward the front in a broad curve, projects here quite a bit beyond the front of the house and covers the stone terrace before the entrance, which is supported by posts, where the occupants customarily sit during the daytime. Firewood is also piled up here at the sides. In the rear the roof ridge is very little--or not at all--curved; the general impression which the house makes through its roof form has been compared with a pig which stands with bowed head before the fodder trough. Generally speaking, the Khasi houses are not very large. I did not see any houses longer than from 6 to 9 meters and with a width of from 3 to 5 meters. However, according to Gurdon (p. 30) there are sometimes houses with a length of more than 20 meters. The interior is completely dark. Sometimes a small window at the side--an innovation--or a second side entrance allows some light to filter in. From the roofed terrace one enters first an anteroom which contains at both sides provisions, potatoes, and also wood. A board wall which is closed on top by a wooden grate, where light and air can pass through, separates this anteroom from the main room; upon entering one has to walk up a few steps or climb over a high threshold. [354] In the middle, toward the rear, is the fireplace. If the owner has a distilling license from the 273 British authorities (76) the distilling vessels

76. The restriction through license to counteract a little the consumption of alcohol, exists only in the area of Shillong. Otherwise the brandy production by the Khasi is not regulated.

for the preparation of rice or millet brandy are always kept here. The people have a strong preference for alcohol and especially on bazaar days it is no rarity to see tipsy people. I observed this particularly at the bazaar in Nong-